

February issue of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE. So far as the citizens of Santa Barbara County are concerned we have been informed that "there is a recall petition out in Santa Maria against Mr. Preisker" and that "more than enough signatures have been secured to go through with it. However, a recall cannot go through until June or July, which is six months following his going into office."

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A Somewhat Similar State Medicine Problem in Orange County.—It may be of interest in connection with the Santa Maria-Santa Barbara complex to quote from a letter from Doctor N. D. Newkirk of Anaheim, Orange County, who tells of some of the difficulties which Orange County is facing in these matters:

"I have just read your editorial on the action of the supervisors of Santa Barbara County in openly making a bid for business below cost. We here in Orange County have had to face the same condition and have become very anxious about the matter.

"It is the law here too, I believe, that County Hospitals are for indigents. The supervisors elect to say, however, that indigents are not merely the hopelessly poor, but are rated according to a sliding scale of earnings. The whole question hinges around what the term indigent legally means. Our County Hospital here now contains over twice as many patients as all the pay hospitals in the county, and they collect a very considerable amount of cash from patients. They even handle industrial conditions, and I understand that certain corporations have specified to their men in charge that injured men be sent at once to the county hospital as the rate there is low. Once in, it is hard to get them out. The unfortunate phase of the whole thing is that the physicians and surgeons are asked to donate their services and are expected to do so. As long as we foolishly continue to do this I see no remedy.

"It would please us all if the state medical society would get under this matter and make a test case in court. If it appears that the supervisors are legally allowed to go into business in competition with the private hospitals and that the public at large is permitted to have hospital care in county hospitals for less than cost, then the various staffs of these charity hospitals will know what action to take."

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A Digest of the California Law on County Hospitals, Which Is Printed in This Issue.—The basic law of California relating to county hospitals and the class of citizens eligible thereto is but little understood by members of the medical profession. Through the courtesy of Dr. Neal N. Wood, superintendent of the Los Angeles County Hospital, the editor is able to present in this issue of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE, excerpts from official state and county correspondence dating back for some ten years or so. Some of the references to the legal codes which are made therein will enable county society committees which are interested to secure for themselves the full text of these laws. The excerpts which are printed in this number of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE will be found in the Miscellany Department, under the caption "California Laws Regarding County Hospitals," (see page —).

Members of the California Medical Association who are interested in this important question, and practically all members should be, if they scan the references above referred to, will be able to acquaint themselves with some of the difficulties and intricacies of these county hospital problems, which are assuming such great importance to both members of the medical profession and of the public.

PROPOSED LAWS BEFORE THE PRESENT CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

The Usual Deluge of Proposed Public Health Legislation.—A list of proposed laws which have been submitted to the Forty-ninth California Legislature which is now in session, as compiled by Chairman Harris of the California Medical Association Committee on Public Policy and Legislation, is printed in the Miscellany Department of this number of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE (see page 223).

A glance at that list shows its formidable character. Also how great must be the amount of time and effort given to an inspection of these measures, by those of our officers who have special responsibilities in these matters.

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Future Discussion of These Proposed Laws Will Be Made.—At the meeting of the council of the California Medical Association held on January 31, a very considerable discussion was given to the more important of these proposed laws. At the time of this writing, it is a bit early to state which of these contemplated statutes contain provisions inimical to the best interests of organized and scientific medicine and of the public health. In the second half of this Forty-ninth Legislature, which is now in session, it will become somewhat more apparent as to where danger may be expected. In a later issue and before adjournment of the legislature, various measures of special interest will be discussed in this column. In the meantime, members who are interested in certain bills should write for copies. For reference purposes, a list of state senators and state assemblymen is printed in the Miscellany Department of this issue (see page 224).

A Layman's Interest in Medicine.—Mr. Earle P. Charlton who, by reason of unusual business ability and industry amassed a large fortune, has shown his appreciation of the importance of medicine and the service rendered by physicians by incorporating in his will an endowment of \$500,000 for the Truesdale Hospital in Fall River in addition to a direct bequest to this hospital to be used in cancellation of debts accrued previous to January 1, 1926.

Tufts College will receive one-third of about one million dollars for research work in the medical department.

This is an illustration of the educational influence of hospitals and practitioners of medicine in attracting the attention of successful business men to the wisdom of supplying adequate support for institutions devoted to the alleviation of human suffering.—*New England Journal of Medicine*, December 4, 1930.